

the upper surface of the upper insulating plate 1 with the upper electrode pin portion 5b kept constantly in contact with a terminal on the relay board. Because only the lower electrode pin portion 5a is required to access each of the products to be tested, the electroconductive contact unit 3 in the form of a coil spring is allowed to undergo a cyclic compression without risking the dislodging of the contact unit from the assembly. This contributes to the reduction in cost.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 26-31. In accordance with 37 CFR 1.121 a complete set of pending claims as amended is set forth below.

8. An electroconductive contact unit assembly comprising an electroconductive contact unit in the form of a coil spring for resiliently contacting an object to be contacted, the contact unit being coaxially received in a through hole formed in an insulating support member, characterized by that:

the through hole having a first diameter in an intermediate portion positioned between first and second axial ends and a reduced diameter portion adjacent at least one of the axial ends;

the contact unit in the form of a coil spring comprising a coil spring portion having a coarsely wound portion positioned in the intermediate portion of the through hole and at least one electrode pin portion comprising a closely wound portion at one end of the coil spring portion, the closely wound portion having a tapered or stepped shape so as to be prevented from coming off by the reduced diameter portion;

only the closely wound portion of the contact unit being surface processed so as to include a first layer of electroconductive material that covers an outer surface defined by a plurality of turns of the closely wound portion of the coil spring in a continuous manner.

9. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 8, wherein the reduced diameter portion comprises a tapered hole section provided at each axial end of the through hole, and the electrode pin portion is formed at each end of the coil spring portion, and is tapered in shape and closely wound so as to be prevented from coming off by the corresponding tapered hole section of the through hole.

10. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 8, wherein the reduced diameter portion has a smaller inner diameter than an outer diameter of the coil spring portion, and is provided at each axial end of the through hole.

11. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 8, wherein the coil spring portion is wound at a uniform pitch.

12. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 8, wherein the electrode pin portions are each closely wound with a pre-stress.

13. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 11, wherein the electrode pin portions are each closely wound with a pre-stress.

14. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 8, wherein the surface processing is conducted after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

15. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 11, wherein the surface processing is conducted after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

16. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 12, wherein the surface processing is conducted after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

17. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 13, wherein the surface processing is conducted after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

18. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 14, wherein the surface processing is conducted after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

19. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 8, wherein the surface processing is conducted both before and after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

20. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 11, wherein the surface processing is conducted both before and after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

21. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 12, wherein the surface processing is conducted both before and after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

22. An electroconductive contact unit according to claim 13, wherein the surface processing is conducted both before and after the coil spring portion and electrode pin portions are formed out of a wire member.

23. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 8, wherein the layer of electroconductive material comprises a plated layer.

24. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 8, wherein the electroconductive material comprises a member selected from a group consisting of gold, nickel and copper.

25. An electroconductive contact unit assembly according to claim 8, wherein each turn of a wire member that forms the coil spring includes a second layer of electroconductive material, and further wherein the second layer of electroconductive material is beneath the first layer of electroconductive material.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Cancelled)